

Week Four: *Embracing diversity: recognizing human differences and appreciating them*
Romans 12:3-8

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. Embracing diversity seems to be another buzzword lately. What is your gut reaction to the concept of embracing diversity?
2. Typically, we consider embracing diversity as something we should do because it is the *right thing* to do for others. How does knowing that embracing diversity is a success skill affect how you feel about it?
3. Read Romans 12:3-8. What is one benefit to diversity shown in these verses?
4. Read Ephesians 4:15-16. How is having diversity in giftedness a more efficient way of getting work done?
5. What other practical applications does this design offer? Brainstorm a short list.
6. As you finish your FIFTEEN in prayer, ask God to open your heart and mind to make you teachable this week as you consider the success skill of embracing diversity.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

7. Look again at Romans 12:3 and consider yourself with sober judgment. What types of things are you good at and what are you not good at?
8. If God created each of us with different gifts and no one with all gifts, how does that make you feel about your inability to excel at everything?
9. How about in others? How would you rate your ability to accept the gifts or shortcomings in others?
10. When we look at diversity as a way to fill in our gaps, we begin to see a tool that truly is a success skill; after all, no one can do everything, but together we can accomplish so much more. Think back to question 7. What were some of your shortcomings you thought of? Who are the people in your life that fill in some of those gaps?
11. When you think about the people that come to mind in question 10, what are some of the ways you fill in gaps for them?
12. Look again at Romans 12:5. Who do we belong to?

13. End your FIFTEEN with a prayer of gratitude. Thank God for the gifts he's given you, and even your shortcomings. Then, thank him for the people he's given you that help you where you need it most.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

14. When you think of diversity, what comes to mind? Quickly jot down a definition.
15. Read Galatians 3:28. What types of divisions are listed in this verse?
16. Which types of diversity are easiest for you to embrace? Which types are the most difficult? Explain your answer.
17. Let's look again at our very interesting story in 2 Kings 5:17-19. For what did Naaman ask Elisha to forgive him? What was Elisha's response?
18. Elisha's response could have been, "Yes, I forgive you for that." Or "I understand." What does his response say to you?
19. Read Hebrews 12:14. If one of the benefits of embracing diversity is learning to live in peace with others, how will that benefit you? Try to use some specific examples.
20. As you finish your FIFTEEN today, ask God to help you to learn to live in peace with others.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

21. Have you ever been a part of a group project, whether at school, work, as a volunteer, or even a family project? Did you enjoy working with others or was it just something you had to do?
22. Working with others is nearly unavoidable in life. Even if your work does not require group work, we are all part of other groups. Vacations with our families, planning weddings or funerals, even dividing up former family homes or estates, to name a few. What makes them some of the most contentious moments in life?
23. Last week we looked at empathy as a success skill. How does empathy help you to embrace diversity?
24. Look again at Romans 2:3-8. How does remembering that others might have skills and gifts we don't have help us to embrace their differences?

25. Look at your answer to question 22; if part of your answer was that other people's opinions and ideas make it more difficult, how can you take steps to embrace what others have to say? (For instance, employ empathy to understand other's perspectives.)
26. As you end your FIFTEEN in prayer, ask God to help you recognize in times when embracing diversity is required that it is also a blessing to you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

27. As we have been looking at this week, one of the benefits of diversity is that it is easier to get work done with a diverse set of skills and experiences. But there is another side to diversity; read Revelation 7:9-10. How is God's idea a perfection painted in heaven?
28. Now list all of the benefits you enjoy by experiencing other cultures. (i.e., travel, experiencing new food.)
29. Which of these is your favorite? How does it enhance your life? What does he teach us to pray for in verse 10?
30. If a diverse heaven is God's ideal—his picture of perfection—and he tells us that we need to pray for our Earth to be more like heaven, it makes sense that our world being diverse will make it better. How does that impact your willingness to embrace diversity?
31. Spend your final FIFTEEN this week in prayer, asking God to let the values of his kingdom rule in our hearts and minds.